Purchase of Rigs from Foreign Countries

1046. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the ONGC is getting rigs from foreign companies, despite the BHELs' capacity to provide them on competitive prices ;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor ; and

(c) the number of rigs presently owned or hired by the ONGC for exploration ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) and (b) Recently ONGC has not purchased any land rigs. However, earlier ONGC was purchasing land rigs from BHEL on nomination basis except when the procurement was under World Bank assistance where it was necessary to float a global tender.

(c) At present ONGC is operating 105 owned and 30 charter hired rigs, for exploration or development drilling.

Complaints Aganist LPG Agencies

1047. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any complaints against the L.P.G. Agencies and retail outlets functioning in the country for indulging in malpractices during the year 1991 and 1992 so far ;

(b) if so, the details of such complaints, Statewise ;

(c) what action Government have so far taken or propose to take on those complaints ; and

(d) what steps/measures Government have so far taken to check such complaints in future ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) and (b) Several complaints have been received during 1991-92 regarding mal-practices indulged in by the LPG dealers and retail outlet owners. Necessary action is taken promptly in this regard.

(c) and (d) The various marketing companies also conduct regular, surprise and joint inspections to check such mal-practices.

Explosion due to Gas Leakage

1048. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a loud explosion took place near Marteru village in West Godavari district in January this year due to gas leakage on the pipeline carrying natural gas from Narsapur pumping centre to a plant at Vijjeswaram ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that dozens of cases of leakage have been reported on this pipeline in the same area over a period of time ; and

(c) if so, whether any inquiry has been conducted and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) There was a leakage in the pipeline near Marteru Village in West Godavari District in January, 1992 due to opening of seam of the pipe.

(b) There had been a few leakages in the pipeline in the past, due to opening of seam of the pipes and corrosion.

(c) Yes, Sir. ONGC have conducted a preliminary enquiry to find out the reasons for the leakages.

Supply of Gas for Pipavav Gas Project

1049. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the ONGC and Government have asured the Gujarat